

Diocese of Joliet

Office of the Bishop



Blanchette Catholic Center
16555 Weber Rd.
Crest Hill, Illinois 60403

August 28, 2017
Memorial of St. Augustine

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I want to express my gratitude to you for your important role as catechists in our diocese and parishes. Some of you have been assisting in this way for years, while others will be just starting this fall.

You provide an exceptionally important service to young people and their parents in our diocese. Perhaps sometimes you might be tempted to think that what you do has little impact on your students. None of us is able to judge the effect that our spiritual ministry has on others. We rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to fulfill our task and also to provide fruitfulness for our labors.

As chief pastor of the Diocese of Joliet, I affirm the importance of the role of catechists. Every moment that you have with our young people is a golden opportunity to instill within them the power of God's word and the truth of salvation.

Because of the importance of your ministry, it is essential that you be as prepared as possible. The Diocese of Joliet has a policy that expects all catechists to participate in at least six hours of ongoing catechist formation each year. You may try to argue that you are already putting in enough time with your actual teaching. However, if you have accepted the responsibility of catechist – and I presume that you have felt called by God to do so – then accepting that responsibility includes being adequately prepared to carry it out.

Many of our predecessors in the work of the Gospel, including the apostles, had little understanding of what God would expect of them when he called them forth. Perhaps when you were recruited as a catechist, you did not fully appreciate what would be expected of you. But as partners with the Lord in the work of the Gospel and the care of souls, we should consider it an honor to strive for excellence in what we do.

May the Lord bless you, your students and your ministry of teaching.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Daniel Conlon". To the left of the signature is a small blue cross.

Most Reverend R. Daniel Conlon
Bishop of Joliet